

The Stages of Samadhi According to the Ashtanga Yoga Tradition

by [Sarasvati Buhrman](#)

Sometime after 350 B.C. a great yogi whom history knows as the sage Patanjali wrote an exposition on yoga, now regarded as the defining text for the traditions that have become known as classical yoga.

This text, the *Yoga Sutra*, is one of the most detailed maps of higher consciousness ever produced on this planet; it deals primarily with the nature of mind, and with how mind is transformed through different stages of *samadhi* (higher consciousness) until the liberated state, or *kaivalya*, finally appears. It is also extraordinary in its integration of theory and practice. Patanjali mentions two systems of yoga in the *Yoga Sutra*: *kriya yoga* (comprising austerity, self-inquiry, and surrender to God), and *ashtanga yoga*, the well-known eightfold path. Together they systematize and explain yoga practice in a manner that makes both the goal of yoga practices and the way in which the practices lead to the goal exceptionally clear.

The *Yoga Sutra*, is one of the most detailed maps of higher consciousness ever produced on this planet.

Here we will examine meditation experiences from the perspectives of ashtanga (*raja*) yoga, but it is necessary to understand that the Patanjali system does not actually describe meditation experiences directly. Rather, it describes the transformations of mind that unfold over the course of what for most of us is years of *sadhana* (spiritual practice), and it does so by focusing on the relationship between the mind and the object of meditation. While this often seems like such an indirect approach to describing what should happen in the process of meditation practice that many meditators cannot relate to it at all, there is a good reason why Patanjali did it this way.

Most of the experiences that occur in the lowest stages of *samprajñata samadhi* (samadhi with higher knowledge) contain many personal and cultural elements (for example, one's religion). Further, they are related to the particular object the meditator has chosen. In the higher stages of *samprajñata samadhi* there are many more universal elements because all objects have the same source, but, even then, the experiences of those who attain these levels are not always identical in every feature. By describing the activity of the mind in relation to the object of meditation, rather than focusing on the content of the experience itself, Patanjali has created a system that can be applied more universally. Thus meditation experiences can be attributed to specific stages of *samadhi* when, and only when, they seem to meet all the criteria for that stage. In this article I try to help the reader bridge the gap between mind and experiences by providing what I believe are appropriate examples of meditation experiences of my brothers and sisters on the spiritual path, yogis whom I interviewed in the course of preparing my doctoral thesis.

To understand the explanations of *samadhi* that follow, it is helpful to understand three basic points at the outset. The first is that *samadhi* is not something that only celibate yogis living in caves in India can experience. In my 20 years of teaching yoga I have often been struck by the number of people in North America who practice asanas diligently, but do not practice pranayama and meditation because they believe that people cannot progress in meditation while living a householder's life. But the Upanishads, the Puranas, and the *Yoga Vasishtha* all contain stories of great yogis and yoginis who were householders and parents. Other yoga practitioners, and even many asana teachers, do not meditate because they do not understand the value in doing so or because they have not taken the deeper teachings of yoga to heart. Some also erroneously believe that they cannot begin pranayama and meditation until they have perfected asana practice, a fatal misconception which can indefinitely delay starting one of life's most important activities.

Actually, the first level of *samadhi*, *savitarka*, is simply a deepening of *dhyana*. According to my teacher, Baba Hari Dass, most meditators who practice regularly for an hour or two every day attain this stage within a few years if they are given proper instruction. I remember one of Babaji's 1977 *Yoga Sutra* classes in which the discussion centered on *savitarka samadhi*. At one point Babaji gestured around the room of about 20 practicing meditators and wrote, "Almost everyone here gets this." So in the beginning we should have faith that the masters of yoga are telling us to do practices because those practices can in fact yield the desired results. As our practice advances, our experiences will confirm that our faith was not misplaced. Attaining *samadhi* may not be easy, but it is certainly possible.

Second, it is important to understand that when we say that a person achieves *samadhi* during meditation practice we do not necessarily mean that the mind always goes into that state and maintains

it uninterruptedly for a long period. While this can happen, often meditators experience samadhi for a short period of time, and then their mind goes outward again and drops to a lower level of consciousness. This outward flowing of the mind is called *vyutthana*, and it happens when our thoughts, attachments, desires, and memories about the outside world (which are temporarily suppressed in samadhi) become active again. If the mind is able to regain the same depth of concentration, we may be able to reenter samadhi. In this way we may go into and out of samadhi several times in one meditation session. Through the process of samadhi and *vyutthana* the mind makes a comparison between the two states and feels the greater subtlety and peacefulness of the samadhi state. This encourages the meditator to try again to attain the higher state.

In each stage of samadhi the aspirant must first fully experience what that stage can reveal, and then lose attraction for it before he or she can advance to the next stage.

Third, samadhi is not a single state, but rather a series of stages that unfold in a progression. Every stage of samadhi invariably yields two kinds of fruit: some type of directly experienced “knowledge” and some degree of non-attachment. As the yogi advances on the path of *sadhana* the knowledge gained is increasingly profound, and the non-attachment has a more deep and lasting effect on the mind. Each stage may take months or years to achieve and even more time to stabilize. How long this will take can vary enormously, depending on the intensity of the meditator’s desire for liberation, the intensity and regularity of the practice, and one’s *samskaras* (mental impressions) from meditation practice performed in past lives. And, as Patanjali reminds us, samadhi is also achieved through surrender to God. In each stage of samadhi the aspirant must first fully experience what that stage can reveal, and then lose attraction for it before he or she can advance to the next stage. Progression through the stages of samadhi is also a process of purification. Each stage purifies the mind, making it subtler and thus capable of penetrating deeper into the levels of cosmic existence in order for the next stage to be achieved.

Preparing the Mind

It is sometimes said that the first stages of the meditation process are the most difficult, but each of the prior limbs of *ashtanga yoga* contributes to the attainment of samadhi. The *yamas* and *niyamas* purify the mind; *asana* makes it possible to sit comfortably for long periods of time; *pranayama* provides energy to drive concentration deeper. But Patanjali actually defines *yoga* as the cessation of the thought-waves in the mind (1:2), and the first steps toward this goal (2:54 and 3:1) are to learn to withdraw one’s attention from externals (*pratyahara*) and to control the expression of the thought-waves by concentrating the mind on an object (*dharana*). The term “object” does not refer exclusively to a physical object—it can be anything which is spiritually meaningful to the meditator, like a particular *chakra*, an image of a deity, the breath, the image of an enlightened being, inner light, inner sound, mantra, etc. Ultimately it is the concentration itself which produces samadhi, not the object. And the source of all objects, which appears spontaneously in the mind when higher stages are attained, is the same. But it is a hard austerity to teach the mind to concentrate on one principle exclusively, and we can make it easier for ourselves by choosing an object of meditation for which we feel a personal affinity.

Dharana (the repeated effort to return the mind to one’s meditation object during meditation practice) eventually develops into *dhyana* (the comparatively effortless flow of awareness from the mind to the object), and *dhyana* in time develops into samadhi. When *dhyana* is repeatedly attained, the peaceful or euphoric feelings produced begin to balance the mind’s resentment toward the discipline of concentration. Samadhi starts when the relationship between mind and object deepens to the point at which the mind’s awareness of itself concentrating diminishes, and awareness of the object dominates the mind.

Stages of Samprajñata Samadhi

In book 1 of the *Yoga Sutra*, “Samadhi Pada,” Patanjali introduces the concept of samadhi and its stages in verses 17–23, and defines it more completely in sutras 42–51. Patanjali defines two broad categories of samadhi: *samprajñata samadhi*, or samadhi with higher knowledge, which occurs through the absorption of the mind into an object; and *asamprajñata samadhi*, “beyond higher knowledge,” a very high stage in which there is no object of concentration; rather, the yogi’s consciousness is merged into absolute consciousness, *Purusha*. Because only *asamprajñata samadhi* destroys the seeds of all *samskaras* remaining in the *chitta* (the mind-field) and thus gives ultimate freedom, or *kaivalya*, it is the only state that brings about an alteration of consciousness which is completely permanent. *Asamprajñata samadhi* is extremely difficult to attain because of the high degree of mental purity, desirelessness, and non-attachment which is required to achieve it.

Because it is non-dual in nature—and thus there is no sense of an experiencer and an object of experience in *asamprajñata samadhi*—“meditation experiences” cannot be properly discussed in relation to this *samadhi*. Thus, experiences that we read about or hear described reflect states of *dhyana* or different stages of *samprajñata samadhi*. These stages of *samprajñata samadhi* unfold gradually, and repeated *samadhi* experiences act to purify the mind. Over the long term the everyday mind also exhibits a general progression toward greater clarity, understanding, peace, and non-attachment because the positive *samskaras* which are laid down in the *chitta* as the result of *samadhi* help to overpower our negative *samskaras*. However, as the Buddha pointed out, *samprajñata samadhi* states are impermanent, and thus ego, attachment, desires, fears, etc. can all reappear in the waking state. So it is wise to remember that the stages of *samprajñata samadhi* constitute important way stations whose realizations profoundly shape the way we view the universe, but they are not the final goal of practice. In *sutra* 1:17 Patanjali tells us that *samprajñata samadhi* comprises four stages: “Complete high consciousness (*samprajñata samadhi*) is that which is accompanied by *vitarka* (reasoning), *vichara* (reflection), *sananda* (ecstasy), and *sasmita* (a sense of ‘I’-ness).” In *sutras* 1:42–44 *vitarka* is subdivided into *savitarka* and *nirvitarka*, and *vichara* into *savichara* and *nirvichara*; thus, in this understanding of the division, there are six stages within the category of *samprajñata samadhi*.

“*Savitarka*,” according to Baba Hari Dass, means “thought transformation on an object with the help of words.” Perhaps it is because so much of the everyday mind’s processes, including words, remain intact in this level of *samadhi* that many meditators do not recognize that they have in fact experienced *samadhi*. In ordinary consciousness the mind goes outward and thinks about many things, shifting from one object/idea to another with great rapidity and fluidity. In *dharana* and *dhyana* the thought-waves are slowed down and directed in a continuous flow toward a single object rather than toward many objects. In *savitarka samadhi* the ordinary mental functions still go on, but identification with the object deepens so that the mind is less aware of its own processes than it was during *dhyana*. In other words, in *savitarka samadhi* the mind is “glued” to the meditation object and cannot think about any other object until the *samadhi* is broken, but the way the mind relates to this single object is not very different from the way the mind thinks about objects in the normal waking state.

“Knowledge,” in yogic terms, always carries a sense of distinguishing the real from the unreal. When we see or remember objects in the external world our perception triggers a combined cognition of *artha*, the physical form or its recalled image; *shabda*, the sound or name with which we communicate the object’s identity to others; and *jñana*, personal or cultural information about the nature, purpose, or function of that object. For example, we all instantly know the meaning of the sound “cat” when we hear it in English, but when speaking another language we would use a different sound to identify a member of the same species. Similarly, when we think about the function of a domestic cat we might think of cats’ historical roles as mouse-catchers in human habitations, or as companions, or as predators with a particular role in the food chain. While all of these are correct associations and represent correct knowledge, they are also human projections—they tell us little about the true essence of what it is to live and experience “catness,” to experience an overwhelming compulsion to chase moving objects, for example, or to lick the snow off of your paws in winter. Thus *shabda* and *jñana* are considered less real than *artha*.

“Knowledge,” in yogic terms, always carries a sense of distinguishing the real from the unreal. In *savitarka samadhi* all three of these components are part of the process of contemplating the object of meditation, just as they are part of our cognition of any object we choose to pay close attention to in ordinary consciousness. Words are used as a support for concentrating on and obtaining knowledge about our meditation object. Thoughts about the object seem to flow spontaneously into the mind; sometimes these thoughts represent correct and newly revealed knowledge about the nature of the object that was not previously known to the meditator; sometimes they are products of what was already known or thought about in everyday awareness. For example, one of my guru sisters once commented that when she meditated on the sound of OM thoughts would spontaneously arise about the nature of OM, and that these thoughts seemed to deepen her meditation rather than distract her. Another person, describing an experience of this same stage, lost awareness of body and breath while meditating on a specific mantra. While the awareness of the mantra repeating itself remained in the mind (*shabda*), as did her understanding of the mantra’s purposes for healing and liberation (*jñana*), she experienced the *artha*, or essence of the mantra, as the healing energies of light and peace permeating different subtle body centers.

Through repeated experiences of *savitarka samadhi* the mind becomes capable of understanding the *mahabhutas* (the five states of matter in Sankhya philosophy) and their functioning in the physical

universe. Baba Hari Dass wrote: “With the attainment of vitarka, or reasoning samadhi, the aspirant realizes the bhutas to be the ultimate basis for all visible phenomena. All gross knowables are directly understood to be nothing but combinations of the five elements.” Bodies of knowledge that could be inferred to have arisen from the vitarka levels of human consciousness are those that relate physical, mental, physiological, and emotional expressions and tendencies of individual beings to universal energy patterns of the physical cosmos (such as ayurvedic medicine, astrology, the practice of yoga asanas, and the relationship of sacred language to form and object). Repeated experiences of savitarka samadhi prepare the mind for the next stage, nirvitarka samadhi.

Nir means “without”: nirvitarka samadhi refers to the state in which the mental alternations of shabda, artha, and jñana are suspended. The less-real components, shabda and jñana, fall away completely, while the mind is absorbed in only artha, or form, and loses its awareness of being the knower. Thus the memory of personal and cultural projections about the nature of the object of concentration (its identifying sound or word in the meditator’s language, and the accumulated cultural knowledge and personal insights derived from this knowledge) are temporarily transcended during nirvitarka samadhi. The mind becomes immersed in artha alone, which is actually not only the image of the physical form but also the feeling, function, and essence of it, revealed through the mind’s one-pointed absorption in its form. As the mind goes deeper into the artha of the object the gross form is transcended and the subtle underlay of the object is revealed.

As one yogini recounted: “When I did my sitting practice just now, it seemed too noisy outside to do my usual practice of nada yoga (concentration on the inner sound), so I meditated on the guru instead. First I felt Babaji’s energy and his lovingness helping my meditation so that my brain became charged with energy. Then I felt as if my body were his body: My legs are his legs; I see inside my body and it is his body, and I can feel the shakti of his body in my body. It is so blissful. Then the guru turned into light; there was nothing but light.”

If we look at what happened in this experience, we can see that this yogini’s mind first merged into the physical form of the object of meditation (the physical form of the teacher), and then the resulting subtle form (light) was revealed as her mind went deeper. The kind of knowledge obtained in this experience is an example of *pratyaksha* (direct experience), one of the means to *pramana* (right knowledge). The example also illustrates the way in which nirvitarka samadhi acts as a bridge between the physical and subtle universes.

Vichara samadhi (savichara and nirvichara) is described by Patanjali in sutras 1:44 and 45: “Savichara and nirvichara samadhis, in which the object is subtle, are also explained by the foregoing [two sutras on savitarka and nirvitarka],” and “The state of samadhi concerned with subtle objects extends up to Prakriti, the source of all manifestation.” In the nirvitarka example (meditation on the guru), the yogini’s mind penetrated to the subtle or tanmatric level of her object of meditation. But when the mind becomes immersed in this subtle level of the object thus revealed, and then begins to more fully explore that subtle object (as in the nada yoga example), this is savichara samadhi.

Notice, however, that the verbal thinking process (our main tool for cognition in both ordinary consciousness and in savitarka samadhi) was suppressed at the nirvitarka level. Therefore only a subtle and largely non-verbal perceptual process is possible in savichara. The words the yogi uses to describe the experience in these samadhis come later, when the yogi recollects the experience. Nor is the object of meditation still perceptible in its original form at this more refined level of consciousness. Now the mind (*buddhi*) experiences and explores the subtler level of the object through an alternation of awareness between its spatial, temporal, and causal aspects.

The words the yogi uses to describe the experience in these samadhis come later, when the yogi recollects the experience.

As Baba Hari Dass explained: “In *desh* (space), *kal* (time), *nimita* (cause) [there is] no way to think. The object is subtle, but it takes place by itself. The more the concentration deepens, the more the mind gets sharp and penetrates.” Because of the experiential knowledge gained in this samadhi, the yogi practicing at this level comes to view the universe as one of subtle energies and subtle forms. Nirvitarka and savichara samadhis can also make the mind more receptive to various tanmatric experiences, such as the *darshan* (sight) of deities or other subtle entities, the inner sounds (*nada*), the divine taste, the divine smell, or the inner feeling of divine touch (see commentaries to sutra 1.35). Because of the fascinating nature of this stage it can create strong attachment; therefore some meditators find it difficult to go beyond savichara to attain the next stage, nirvichara, which requires relinquishing all subtle differentiation.

As savichara samadhi deepens, the yogi may begin to develop an understanding of the true nature of time and space and may also gain knowledge of certain aspects of the *mahat*, or cosmic mind (objects

up to Prakriti). In the words of one practitioner: “[It is like] seeing in the light-field the origin of thoughts, of form, of different energies, and of how it manifests outward in the waves of prana emanating from one undifferentiated source and ending with condensed differentiated objects.”

In nirvichara samadhi sattva guna alone is active. Tamas guna is suppressed, resulting in the inactivation of memory and any cognition of subtle form; and rajas guna is also suppressed, which stops the fluctuations in the mind’s cognitive process. For the first time true one-pointed concentration, the sattvic state of ekagara chitta, becomes possible. Even subtle thoughts do not occur. The perceptual limitations of time and space are transcended; the mind ceases to fluctuate between time, space, and causality, and becomes situated in the causality of the tanmatric energies in mind and subtle objects, the undifferentiated energy in the mahat and the principle of individuation (*ahankara*) and tamas guna which cause the five *tanmatras* (subtle element/energies) to be formed. So the realization of this samadhi, which transcends any sort of differentiation, is explained variously as the origin of thought itself, the unreality of objectification, or the ahankara.

As one of Tasha Abelar’s teachers explained to her, holding up a leaf: “Perhaps this leaf will help clarify things. . . . Its texture is dry and brittle; its shape is flat and round, its color is brown with a touch of crimson. We can recognize it as a leaf because of our senses, our instruments of perception, and our thought that gives things names. Without them, the leaf is abstract, pure undifferentiated energy. The same unreal, ethereal energy that flows through this leaf flows through and sustains everything. We, like everything else, are real on the one hand, and only appearances on the other.”

Here are two examples, which my guru brothers and sisters were kind enough to share with me. In both cases their descriptions begin with savichara, and then progress to nirvichara: “There was the usual cognition of inner light and inner sound, but the most important parts of the sadhana are the parts I can’t describe, where breath and mind just stop.” “The kriyas felt very deep this morning and just after I finished, I saw the brahmarandhra; it was beautiful, made of light, and there was this incredible feeling of sweetness. Then, after some time, it was almost as if my mind vanished. I was aware, but there were no thoughts, only this deep silence. It felt very profound.”

The next two stages of samprajñata samadhi—sananda and sasmita—are also considered nirvichara, in that they also are without reflection, but they represent a more advanced development of the nirvichara process.

Babaji once explained that when people feel blissful sensations during sadhana, on a gross level the breath is equal in both nostrils, and on the subtle level pranic flow in ida and pingala nadis is balanced. This is called the sushumna breath because the residual prana of the sushuma, the kundalini, flows in sushumna nadi, causing sattva guna to dominate. “It creates a feeling of peace. That peace is ananda.” In sananda samadhi the experience of that ananda, that sattvic flow, is untainted by any other *vrittis*, or thoughts, save the awareness of the pleasure of receiving that bliss. *Sananda* means “with ecstasy.” The most immediate cause of our pleasure and pain—the identification of the ahankara with the external universe, and with the mind’s thoughts about it—is stopped.

In nirvichara samadhi the mind’s awareness of, and involvement with, the world of objects (both gross and subtle) and their tanmatric origins is cut off. The ahankara, the sense of individuality or “I-am,” stops creating its world; it turns inward, and the happiness which flows from the experience of non-identification is felt. Thus the most immediate cause of our pleasure and pain—the identification of the ahankara with the external universe, and with the mind’s thoughts about it—is stopped. In sananda samadhi the yogi experiences a state of rapture or ecstasy, and the only thought in the mind is the wordless awareness of the feeling of “I am in pleasure, I am happy.” A close friend told of her experience with her guru:

“My deepest states actually happened a few years ago, not now, when I would meditate for eight hours at a time with no awareness of time passing. The focus of my meditation is self-surrender to this greater consciousness which I access through the person of my guru. My mind is only a tiny speck within that immensity, and I try to surrender my small ‘I’ into that immensity. When I go as deep as I can my thoughts stop, my mind goes away. What I see is effulgence; there is ecstasy: what I am, my whole being, is ecstasy.”

Sasmita Samadhi

When the yogi becomes established in the one-pointed state of consciousness achieved in sananda samadhi the mind becomes even more purified, and is able to penetrate deeper. Even the ahankara, or ego-sense—despite its power, its pervasive nature, and its seeming solidity—is only a *vritti*, a single thought of individualized existence. This *vritti* too can be suppressed, and when this happens the yogi can directly perceive the source of the ahankara: the mahat, or the cosmic mind, and the asmita *vritti*, the pure “I-sense” which shines within it. This pure “I-ness” of the cosmic mind is universal, the same

in all beings. From a bhakti yoga perspective we would say that the individual ego merges into the cosmic ego, and the person now worships God in everything. The feeling of this samadhi is one of deep and pure peace, free from thoughts and any awareness of individuality. The ecstasy experienced in the previous samadhi becomes subtler, and now clearly seems to emanate from within rather than from some external source.

When the meditator reaches this stage of samadhi the object of meditation automatically becomes the luminous reflection of the Divine Self pervading the cosmic mind, shining in the yogi's heart. This *asmita*, or cosmic "I-sense," is the only *vritti* present. Here is a "first-glimpse" account:

"I never believed in the instant illumination of the Vedas. I knew that *sadhana* practice worked, I could get samadhi, but I was trapped. I could never be free of my individual identity even for an instant. It was like continually throwing myself against a wall and bouncing back. This went on for years. One day we were studying the Gita and I was contemplating with my eyes closed on the words of the commentaries as they were being read. Somehow when I heard the words 'the Self is actionless,' my mind accepted it, and there was this immense ocean of light in the heart and simultaneously I felt the sense of individuality as a mere thought-form, saw it suppressed as though it fell into that vast light and disappeared. It had no reality, no existence. And there was nothing but an infinite peace and this great light unlike anything I had ever experienced. I saw that everything was external to the Self. I was in this ocean of light for some minutes. I came back to ordinary awareness entirely changed—I knew with absolute certainty that the Self exists, and that it is within, and that that very same light radiates inside all beings."

The purified mind takes on the qualities of the object on which it meditates, and when this *sasmita* samadhi becomes stabilized and is further developed, the mind of the yogi who attains it begins to take on some of the omniscient and omnipotent qualities of the cosmic mahat, though it does not happen in the same way for all yogis. *Siddhis*, or latent special abilities of mind such as those described by Patanjali in book 3 of the *Yoga Sutra*, may become active as this stage develops; they can become a serious obstacle to further spiritual growth if the yogi becomes attached to them or if he or she has not worked hard to strengthen the *yamas* and *niyamas*.

The three *gunas*, necessary for the creation of the universe, are active in the cosmic mind, and they are not transcended at this level of samadhi, nor have the remaining *samskaras* in the yogi's *chitta* been destroyed. Nor is the "Self" which is perceived at this stage the true, ultimate, non-dual Self, but its light is seen. For the yogi who is able to navigate this stage, eventually attaining discriminative wisdom and perfect purity of mind and surrendering all attachments, the potential is there to attain the stage which leads to *asamprajñata* samadhi, and finally to *kaivalya*: complete, final, and eternal union with the real, eternal Purusha.

The feeling of seeking for something beyond propels us onto the spiritual path in order to achieve the fulfillment of human life: liberation.

According to Patanjali human life has two purposes: *bhoga* (experience) and *apavarga* (liberation). The human vehicle, with its relatively sophisticated neurophysiological design and cognitive capacities, provides for a seemingly endless tapestry of experiences. And yet, after so many lives of experiencing the external world—so many lives of developing so many different capacities of body and intellect, so many lives of exploring the endless complexity and drama of human relationships—the feeling, often unconscious, arises inside of us that we have already been there, done that. The feeling of seeking for something beyond propels us onto the spiritual path in order to achieve the fulfillment of human life: liberation. The caterpillar, so attached to his caterpillarness, must nevertheless some day become a butterfly, because that is the design plan of the universe. Patanjali, who was undoubtedly a butterfly, left careful instructions for us caterpillars so that we might some day join him.

I am indebted to my guru, Baba Hari Dass, for many of the ideas presented in this article and to my guru brothers and sisters for their invaluable contributions.

References

Abelar, Tasha. *The Sorcerer's Crossing*. New York: Penguin Arkana, 1992.

Aranya, Swami Hariharananda. *The Yoga Philosophy of Patanjali*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1983.

Arya, Pandit Usharbudh, D.Litt. *Yoga-sutras of Patanjali with the Exposition of Vyasa. Volume I: Samadhi-pada.* Honesdale, Pa: Himalayan Institute, 1986.

Buhrman, Sarasvati. *Trance in America: A Comparison of Trance Types and Trance Experience in Two Religious Communities.* Department of Anthropology, University of Colorado at Boulder (Dissertation Abstracts), 1996.

Dass, Baba Hari. *Darshans and tapes from Yoga Sutra classes 1992—1999.*

Dass, Anand, ed. *Yoga Sutras Commentaries of Baba Hari Dass.* Mount Madonna Center, unpublished ms.

Leggett, Trevor, trans. *Shankara on the Yoga Sutras.* Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1990.

Nikhilananda, Swami. *The Upanishads.* New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1963.

Prasada, Ram, trans. *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1981.

Rukmani, T. S., trans. *Yogavarttika of Vijnanabhiksu (Volume 1).* Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, 1981.

Venketesananda, Swami. *The Concise Yoga Vasishtha.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1984.